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# Social Progress



Group Dynamics and the Church . . . . . ROSS SNYDER  
For Christian Leadership in Public Affairs . JOHN F. DUFFY, JR.

JUNE 1950

# Social Progress

## DIVISION OF SOCIAL EDUCATION AND ACTION

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# GROUP DYNAMICS AND THE CHURCH

*By ROSS SNYDER, Associate Professor of Religious Education,  
Chicago Theological Seminary.*

**N**O AMERICAN likes to be pushed around—to be argued into submission to some other person's viewpoint. And a proper resentment burns within him when another treats him as if he were not trying for the truth, or as if his views were of little consequence anyway, or as if he were an enemy—on the other side of the argument—to be vanquished. Yet all too frequently when a church group engages in social action or attempts some project in social education, the members break up into bitter "for" and "against" debate, or, to keep peace, abandon all such efforts.

Has your church a leader or leaders who can conduct a series of discussions on a "hot" social issue—say, socialized medicine or foreign policy—with differing viewpoints present, and help the members to avoid such frequent tensions and conflicts, to progress on the matter at hand? If you have such leadership, chances are that they have had some experience in creative group discussion, or in the relatively new field of group dynamics.

This new field has its own disciplines, and these are important factors to the most successful group

study and consideration of the social issues that concern Christians.

If you have the conviction and boldness to keep trying such important activity, then you are interested, as a Christian, in acquiring *the disciplines of group dynamics*.

As a leader in social education and action, you will want to discover how, in situations of group action or conflict, people can be helped to make up their own minds, to change the opinions of others, without causing them to feel rejected or outside the group. Apparently a person can change his views only so long as he feels at home in his group, i. e., is accepted as a *person*, even if his views are not!

A new discipline of human relations is becoming available. People can be trained in it. Leaders in psychological research, counseling, personnel management, industrial relations, educational and religious activities are engaged in building the theory and method of this new discipline.

The whole development is symbolized by what is called the group dynamics movement. At many points group dynamics has affinities with a

basic Christian outlook. The Christian religion also has further contribution to make to the principles and personal adequacy required of leaders.

Conflict is a necessary as well as inevitable feature of our life together. But we must learn how to carry it on without attacking the self-respect of others, so that resistances, defenses, and aggression are aroused.

Why is this self-respect so crucial? There is cumulative psychological evidence that a person's self-concept (his idea and feeling about himself) is his most precious and touchy possession. It is what holds him together and moves him deeply.

We therefore have a working theory to be explored, and to be used in disciplining ourselves, as we act in groups, that *we do not say and do things which threaten another person's self-concept*.

This is no simple or easy principle. For unless at heart you really do respect the other person, he perceives you as a threat to his own self-respect no matter what clever devices you may have acquired to enforce your own opinions. So to be skilled in group dynamics, inevitably you are forced to be a better Christian!

In addition to working through fundamental attitudes, we can also learn certain leadership skills that help a group to avoid the necessity of so much ego defense. For example, when a viewpoint has been

expressed, it's usually better not to tag it with the name of the person presenting it as "So-and-So's viewpoint." If you do, his ego demands that he defend it to the last ditch. An individual remark can be considered as the group's—"We have said"—and therefore everybody is in it together. With this approach no one person need feel rejected if the view gets exploded. Then, too, remarks should be addressed to the whole group instead of to particular individuals. This tends to be a mark of good group participation.

To analyze the extent to which all members of a group participate in group discussion, we made a number of wire recordings of discussions and played them back to discover whether there was general participation by the group, or whether a few individuals or the leader tended to do *all* the talking. As we studied these recordings, *group* rather than *individual-directed* remarks seemed to distinguish the *productive* meetings.

We found also that we had to watch the leader and the extent to which he might be a "responsibility snatcher." Does the person in leadership roles in your church treat people as able to take responsibility for their own lives and for their common life? Does he try to force responsibility on them? ("Carry out my plans and purposes" or else! Or demand that individuals speak up in the meeting?) Does he try to act for

them, rather than to keep the members of the group to be responsible for their own decisions and actions from *within* the group?

### Revolutionary Vitality

Deep down in his heart, every minister hopes that a new vitality will break out in his church.

One impulse is to lecture and exhort to good works and denounce the evils of our civilization. This kind of "telling them" is probably most characteristic of the preachers, some of whom appear to be organized by the motive of dominating people. But often this approach tends to arouse subtle defenses against really vital Christianity. It may fill the listeners with resentments which will be unloaded later upon some scapegoat. Better understanding of personal dynamics would lead the pastor to change his preaching methods, and to speak from *within* his people rather than *at* them.

But beyond this change in sermons, we have this further clue. The basic requirement for effective social change and the coming of a new vitality to the church is group study and action in the face-to-face group of eight to fifteen members. The establishment of the feeling of "groupness" in committees of social education and action is prerequisite to all other learning. A group representing various organizations within the church, or a small group of young people, or young adults, a Bible

school class might be characteristic of these face-to-face groupings in the church.

Such a group meeting for six evenings around the pastor's fireplace where each speaks honestly of his religious concerns and questions starts the group process in motion. It releases mental energy. In the early meetings the pastor should speak no more than any other member. He must not be a responsibility snatcher, coming between these people and the establishment of group thinking and concern.

It is important that members of the group have a chance to say what they really feel and think, to unload their tensions, resentments, intentions. Unless there is this "unpacking of the suitcase of the mind and emotions," there is no room for new emotions and ideas.

One small country church that had almost expired took a new lease on life after such a series of meetings. New members were elected to the official board; a new church school staff began to work. A year later a new choir was organized, and a long-needed new stove was bought for the kitchen! But none of these concrete consequences of "group dynamics" were subjects of the discussions. They came as surprises to the pastor.

The dynamics of a "reference group" is this: All our behavior is motivated by our desire to belong to the group we most admire and feel

to be powerful. *That people may change, therefore, they must acquire relationships to the new group that has a new task, and they must feel at home in this group.* Ultimately this group must be the Christian Church (or, more accurately, God working through the Church). But most of us need an immediately available fellowship carrying the potency of the church.

We then have another important hypothesis for our religious leadership—*people can grow more effectively as groups than as individuals.* This is the basic method of effective evangelism and by it we build a Protestant Church.

### New Process of Growing Leaders

What fun to be pastor of a church that has an adequate supply of well-trained lay leaders! Group dynamics methods may find their greatest use.

Comments by members who attended a week's training workshop for teachers in church schools of the Chicago area may communicate some of the flavor and possibilities of the approach. This is what they say made it "click":

My usual pattern of sitting and listening to others talk was hurled out the window. I was a member, therefore I participated.

Everyone is a participant, no one is a spectator.

It's a feeling of really knowing the people and caring about their problems. Could this be Christianity? We think it is—and we think it's pretty exciting and fascinating.

A local pastor in weekly twenty-five-minute sermons cannot supply the needs of earnest Christians for light for living in these times. Each person apparently attends the workshop with the idea that he wishes to advance Christianity in a significant way.

The week's experience was practicing a democratic, religious life instead of just talking about it. The warmth of companionship made one realize a community of believers and thus gave him conviction that he was not alone in the bitter, calloused, and often perverse world.

The working groups were kept small so that everyone could contribute his experiences and thoughts.

Whenever a sincere group of lay people come together for a program which is of their own creation, things happen!

The "experiencing" rather than the preaching method of learning. Here was the Church at work!

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Readers who desire training in this new discipline may want to enroll in a three-week workshop, "Group Dynamics and the Life of the Church," on July 3-21 at the University of Chicago. Address inquiries to Dr. Snyder at the Chicago Theological Seminary, 5757 University Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois.

# FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

*By JOHN F. DUFFY, JR., Assistant Professor of Social Studies,  
Denison University.*

**I**N THIS modern age of the specialist and the technician, our schools and industries have emphasized above all else training for technical achievement. We have reared a generation of experts, skilled and competent in science and research, but inadequately trained and inarticulate about spiritual and moral matters.

The Church must answer the rather general charge that it has been negligent in providing leadership for the adequate solution of some of our most pressing social problems—race relations, industrial relations, international affairs, agricultural surpluses, social security, mental illness, civil liberties, housing, education, Government-business relationships, family life, and politics. At one time, relating Christian principles to such social problems was a rather simple task. Today, our complex industrial society makes it necessary for us to train specialists in Christian living who will play significant roles in establishing and maintaining industrial peace, in bringing about interracial harmony and integration, in distributing reasonably and intelligently surplus agricultural supplies to hungry per-

sons, in decreasing the disruptive effect of city life upon the family.

While these problems concern individuals, they are primarily problems of our social order. Their solution requires action on the part of individual Christians co-operating together to increase the extent and power of the Christian message in everyday life. This co-operation should be people-centered and problem-centered, related to situations that bring people and problems into contact with each other and which impel interested individuals not only to think but also to act.

Such co-operation must be developed consciously. To accomplish it, the Church can become, partially at least, a “campus” where church members may learn the skills, the techniques, and the methods of making Christian principles and Christian ethics powerful influences in directing and changing the course of action on social problems.

A major task of the Christian Church is to teach individuals the skills of personal living for salvation, and for the redemption of society. If the Church is to speak to human ills and needs, it has a responsibility for training its members

in the social skills necessary for the salvation of human beings in their relationships with each other in economic, cultural, political, and social life—the skills necessary to shape and remold the social order in line with Christian principles and ethics.

### **Group Action and Study— Not One-Man Crusades!**

One of the most vital ways of developing these social skills among Christians is through group action and study. Too many churches place almost complete responsibility for Christian social action on one or two persons. The result is that some people are overworked while others do not participate at all.

In many cases this failure to involve the people in the pews in social concerns is due to the fact that church leaders have not tapped the interests of the members of the church, nor have they related social problems to the needs of individuals in the church. The greatest motivation for learning lies in effectively relating the subject to be studied to the needs and interests of those who are making the study. Particularly is this true when study should result in opportunities for action.

The group process in social action is fundamental to the advancement of Christian perspectives. The group works on a problem as a team. Not only do the members of the team differ from one another as individuals, but they differ in background,

viewpoint, and ability. Yet, centering their attention on the problem to be solved, working co-operatively in the spirit of Christ, they can overcome their differences and grow into new personalities through joint study and effort. They can supplement each other's skills.

The most practical development of group activity is found in the small group where all members can become rather well acquainted with one another. Such a group, not more than fifteen in number and preferably about twelve, provides the greatest opportunity for democratic leadership and expression. It is large enough so that the members can share the work load. It is small enough so that all members can participate.

Many kinds of small groups exist in the organizational life of the Church, and some form of social education ought to be going on in all of them. The classes in church schools, the youth commissions of Westminster Fellowship, women's association circles, couples clubs, as well as the duly appointed committee on social education and action—all these groups should be helping their members to turn their Christian faith into life, and to bring the witness of the Church to bear upon the social ills of our times.

Groups can effectively combine academic study with field trips, interviews, and correspondence with authorities on social problems. They

can investigate actual conditions, or hold hearings at which representatives of different viewpoints may present their ideas. If they are studying housing, they can visit the areas under study, talk with people living there. If they are studying industrial peace, they can arrange to visit factories, speak directly with management and union leaders, and compare what they have seen with the things they have learned through reading books. They can also set up an educational program which stimulates as closely as possible the actual problem-solving efforts of different groups in the community. For example, to learn about labor-management relationships, they might meet together as a collective bargaining session or a grievance clinic. To learn about race relationships, they might meet together as the local city council charged with the task of preventing a race riot. Through such activities, members of the groups not only acquire academic information but, by playing the roles of the principals themselves, they get some sense of the difficulties and opportunities that come to the persons who are responsible for working out these problems.

### The Social Problems "Yardstick"

In developing strategies for work on social problems, groups could use a "yardstick," divided according to major problem areas. The yardstick

can indicate the nature of the social problems in the community, listing them under such headings as "very serious," "serious," "normal," "excellent." It can help church members to relate local problems to similar ones which are national or international in scope.

The yardstick can also suggest a time schedule for study and action. There are three time perspectives involved: (a) *before* the social problem has reached a disruptive state; (b) *during* the actual occurrence of a social crisis such as an industrial dispute, a race riot, or a lynching; and (c) *after* the occurrence of a social catastrophe. In the first instance, the group should seek to understand completely the various facets of the problem; it should endeavor to prevent the outbreak of social chaos. An important task is to keep the public informed of opportunities for preventive action. In some communities, the failure of the church to do so has been one of the reasons why race riots have caught the public unawares. *During* a social crisis the group should try to use mediation or conciliation, or, in the case of an attempted or actual lynching, to support the impartial and equal administration of the law, to encourage calmness, and to oppose the use of force and violence. *After* some social catastrophe has occurred in the community, church groups should not be content to let the matter drop but should investigate

the causes of the conflict, making recommendations to the various interested community groups—labor, management, Government, minority groups—which could serve to prevent other catastrophes.

The sample social problems yardstick shown in the diagram indicates the existence or the possibility of an industrial dispute and suggests to the group that emergency action is required to prevent a strike or to reopen peaceful relationships between union and management. It indicates that the Church should begin to give serious attention to the problems of housing and unemployment and points out that civil liberties, race relations, and education are normal or above normal. Such a yardstick can be improvised to meet the particular situations in various communities. The major problem areas could be subdivided to get a more accurate picture. For example, subheads under "Race Relations" could include housing, education, recreation, employment. The group can develop such a yardstick by con-

sulting the local newspaper, civic groups, public officials, pastors, and educators.

### Christian Social Action Changes the Lives of Christians

The group engaging in social action can strive to increase the quality of Christian living at the local level. It should work to make Christianity a dynamic leaven in the changes and transitions going on in society. It can develop among the church members a common understanding of some of the principal methods of Christian social action, i. e., a spirit of conciliation and fair play; a sincere desire to get, and to abide by, all the facts; an effort to listen to and to study all sides of a problem; an attempt to arrive at solutions that are both creative and workable; an effort, in controversial areas, to mediate between the parties in conflict. And, lastly, such a group can remain steadfast, calm, and non-violently loyal to one's deepest concepts of justice in human relationships under God.

### *Social Problems Yardstick*

Problem area	Very serious: needs prompt attention	Serious: continuous attention needed	Normal	Excellent
Civil Liberties			x	
Housing		x		
Industrial Relations	x			
Race Relations			x	
Education				x
Unemployment	x			

## Qualities of Leadership

Groups tend to reflect the capacities, abilities, and objectives of their leaders. Therefore it is urgent that the Church develop, or cooperate in, training programs for group leadership.

Leaders of social action groups need certain personal traits of leadership which might be generally listed as honesty, tolerance, patience, understanding, sincerity, cooperativeness, and perseverance. They should also possess, or be willing to develop, these technical skills of group leadership: concern for the value of the contribution of each member of the group; capacity to lead a democratic discussion, on a controversial subject, in which various viewpoints are represented; ability to sense opportunities for personal, individual growth among members of the group; an understanding of the working relationship between study and action; ability to guide the meetings so that no matter how heated the discussions or how complex the subject the members of the group are conscious of the religious and ethical principles in the work they are doing.

Group leaders should be trained to locate source materials on social problems in the community and in the art of consulting specialists and of making contacts with persons in different walks of life—management,

labor, minority groups, agriculture, politics. Lastly, they should learn how to help others to compile reports and prepare recommendations to be used in presenting the viewpoints of Christians.

But little constructive or creative group activity or growth can result from dictatorial leadership. The authoritarian who demands that the group operate at his beck and call, and believes only in a unilateral leader-follower approach, kills interest and discourages initiative.

The effective Christian leader recognizes that he is a part of the group; in a sense he is the servant of the group. It is not his purpose to dominate, but rather to see to it that all members of the group, in the informal atmosphere of a round-table meeting, share in the leadership of the meetings through participation in decision-making and discussions.

Such a leader also seeks to develop the different capabilities of the members of the group and to fit them into a co-operative pattern of study and action. He calls for group action and group participation in all decisions and seeks to balance the expression of interest between the more dominant and the less dominant personalities in the group. It is leadership of this type which will provide the Church with individuals more capable of representing its concern for social justice in the affairs of men.

# IS LEADERSHIP A FUNCTION OR PREROGATIVE?

*By SEWARD HILTNER, Executive Secretary, Department of Pastoral Services, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.*

EVEN with the statistical genius of the Stated Clerk's office, one would shudder before setting out to count all the organizations that exist in Presbyterian churches across the country. And if information about all the lay leaders of these groups were to be included, nothing short of the census bureau could get the facts.

We are in an organizing culture, and most of our organizations are, at least potentially, useful and important. They are potentially important for two reasons: for the specific work they can do to promote Christian education, race relations, missions, or something else; and for drawing more laymen into an inner sense of the meaning of the priesthood of all believers by actual participation in the work and leadership of the Church.

But if people are to grow in work as the fruit of grace, and are to assimilate the meaning of their priesthood, then the way in which they are helped and guided in their tasks becomes important beyond the mere getting the job done. If their special activity is presented to them as dull, routine, boring, they will respond in

like manner. If they are oversold on its importance and are not taught to see it in perspective, they will either dull it by exaggeration or give it up altogether.

What is true of activity is even more true of the leadership of activity. And we may recall that the "priesthood of believers" means that under certain circumstances every man is a priest, or every man can be his brother's priest. Exercise of the priesthood function, therefore, is the inherent meaning of leadership in the church.

Let us call up an imaginary scene which, though in caricature, is not without all too many real counterparts in the churches. Pastor Jones and a special committee have had to find a new church school superintendent. The one who has just retired has been fairly good but not very progressive. Now there is an opportunity to consolidate gains and move ahead. No one appears precisely suited to the job. But Mr. Grady has taught in the school for ten years and has done an excellent job. On the whole, he seems better than the other possible candidates. By appropriate procedures, he is duly

named. The position is presented to him both as an honor and a responsibility. He assumes office. It shortly becomes evident that new tensions are rising in the church school. One teacher complains in a veiled way to the pastor about Mr. Grady. She cannot quite understand, she hints, how he could have been such a good colleague for so many years, and now seems chiefly interested in throwing his weight around. She believes they could have filled that vacancy in the junior boys' class quite well last week if someone besides Mr. Grady had talked to the prospective teacher. In this situation we may assume that the pastor talks with Mr. Grady, and we may hope he succeeds in helping him to become the real person he was when he was only a teacher and not also a superintendent. If he does not, then the morale of the church school is bound to go downhill.

Basically, what is wrong with the Mr. Gradys in the church is their mistaken inner feeling about what leadership means. They would not put it crassly into words, even to themselves. But their behavior indicates that they regard leadership as the right to exercise certain prerogatives in relation to other people, not as the performance of a special kind of function in relation to those same people. They interpret it as an invitation to "throw their weight around," instead of as an opportunity to work in the same spirit as before but with a different function.

Sometimes this assumption that leadership is the exercise of a prerogative is to be found more in voluntary groups than in business organizations. In the latter, it may be curbed because one can be fired, lose his economic status, if he pushes people around too much. In voluntary groups, the leader may feel that since he is contributing his time and brains he has earned the right to push others around. Whatever the reasons, the results are bad.

The prerogative view of leadership is seen in many forms. It may be a steam-roller tactic in a financial or evangelistic campaign. It may be neglecting to comment explicitly on a good piece of work done by some person or group. It may be pushing people into activities they are not inwardly prepared for on the ground that this is "good for the church." It may be creating an emotional climate in which any conscientious objection to the majority stand on some social issue cannot be honestly voiced. Whatever the form, there lies behind it a notion that the function of leadership is to exercise a prerogative over other people.

It is not strange that even in church we should find this. For long centuries leadership was regarded as the fact of power over other people. And this power was exercised not in virtue of one's competence to exercise needed power (as a judge may do in a democratic judicial process), but simply in view of the position he

held. As democratic political institutions revolted against such a notion of leadership in the state, so Protestantism reacted against its equivalent in the Church. But the full implications are seen only if we move on to all the organizations and groups of the church—and see whether the right *spirit* of leadership is actually being practiced in fact.

The exploitation which church leaders (pastors and laymen) often practice on others is never done consciously for that reason. If it were, the exploitation would not work. But if I, as leader of some enterprise, ever forget that no program goal is worth trampling over people's inner lives, then the chances are that the exercise of my leadership function will revert subtly to exploitation.

Does this mean it is wrong to feel any satisfaction from the exercise of leadership? The answer is that satisfaction in the performance of a function for and within the fellowship is fine, but that satisfaction in the power which leadership status may confer is not. Can the manager of a church dinner take legitimate satisfaction if the dinner has gone off well? Yes, provided he did not exploit the people who cooked and served and promoted and advertised and made the program, and provided he did not in the planning process forget that human values come before program values.

We struggle only very slowly toward an inner feeling for leadership

which means the competent performance of a function valuable to the group. No one who, on reflection, sees that he too has erred need give up in disgust, nor hastily prepare his defenses to prove he never did. In the misuse of leadership, who indeed has not sinned? And yet it seems possible that a direct look at the basic meaning of leadership may help us all. It may at least help to bring our intention and our performance more closely together.

If one is leading a discussion or meeting, what does he do when an ignorant or awkward or negative point is made? If he feels the need immediately to be defensive, to protect his leadership status, he is likely to say, "But this is hardly the point of the discussion." The person may fight back, or be squelched. In either event, the leader has not helped him to bring out the idea or meaning he is struggling for.

Obviously, it would be "soft soap" and not leadership to go to the other extreme and approve every idea however uninformed or extreme. But if, in this situation, the leader is not preoccupied with his leadership *status*, but is concerned to perform his leadership *function*, i. e., helping the group to cohere and move on the basis of the best insights of all its members including his, he is likely to say, "Then if I understand you, you mean such and such . . ." He may then have to disagree. But the intention which the person has been

feeling for has been recognized; an honest effort has been made to understand him; and though he may lose his idea, he has not been made to lose self-respect. There is a world of difference in the attitudes taken by the two leaders, and in the resulting inner feeling of coherence on the part of the group.

When the Seventy came back from their mission and reported to Jesus, amazed, that they had had power over evil spirits just as he had told

them they would, they were not permitted to gloat over their leadership status. Instead Jesus said to them, "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you." In modern parlance, "Don't pat yourself on the back because you now have the power to do something." And he added, "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." One meaning of this can be, "Rejoice because you can perform a function which helps us all."

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### "Friendship Acres"

CROP—Christian Rural Overseas Program—this year will supplement its campaign for American farm produce contributions to feed hungry families overseas by calling on America's farm youth, rural church organizations, and other farm organizations to participate in CROP's Friendship Acre movement.

Those who participate in CROP's Friendship Acre movement set aside a portion of their farm crop or of livestock and, at the time of maturity, will give the yield to CROP for shipment to mass feeding or individual relief projects of church organizations in other countries.

The plan in itself is not new. In Biblical times men set aside a portion of their crop as an offering.

More recently, the Lord's Acre movement, conceived twenty years ago by the Farmers' Federation of Asheville, North Carolina, spread to embrace farming communities throughout the nation to emphasize man's stewardship over God's blessing, the good earth.

CROP's 1950 Friendship Acre project will parallel the Lord's Acre movement and enable America's rural families to aid the world's hungry and develop a new sense of responsibility for the needs of America's neighbors overseas.

To qualify for membership in the Friendship Acre movement, one notifies the local CROP office of his intention to join and signs a pledge designating a plot of corn, wheat, a berry patch, a pig, calf, or a setting of eggs as his individual Friendship Acre project. If there is no CROP office operating in your county, notification of intention to join the movement may be sent in writing to Friendship Acre Project, CROP, 308 West Washington Street, Chicago 6, Illinois.

# THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRONOUNCEMENTS AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

*The democratic process by which pronouncements on social issues are formulated by the General Assembly, and suggested ways in which they may be used to stir and challenge the members of local churches.*

*By CLIFFORD EARLE, Associate Secretary, Division of Social Education and Action, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.*

THAT General Assembly should pronounce on social issues is not a revolutionary innovation. For more than 150 years the Presbyterian Church, through its General Assembly, has issued timely deliverances on public issues and on questions affecting the social behavior of Christians.

The Church assumes that social concern and responsibility are implicit in our faith. They are involved in the very nature of the God we worship and serve. To know him is to serve him, and to serve him is to seek and do his will in all of life.

In its social deliverances, the General Assembly attempts to show how Christian principles "apply to all social, moral, economic, national, and international relationships in our day." The pronouncements express the conviction that Jesus Christ is the final authority over all human life in its social as well as in its individual aspects.

## How Formulated

General Assembly's pronouncements on social matters are the product of a democratic group process in which a large number of qualified persons, both lay and clergy, take part. The procedure may be outlined as follows:

1. Many months before the meeting of General Assembly, the Committee on Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education, working through subcommittees, drafts a number of recommended social deliverances.

This committee, by General Assembly designation, is composed of twenty persons—six from the Board of Christian Education, three from the Board of National Missions, two from The Board of Foreign Missions, and nine from the Church at large, including representatives from the National Council of Presbyterian Men and the National Council

of Presbyterian Women's Organizations. Members of the staff of the Division of Social Education and Action assist the committee in its work on pronouncements.

2. The proposed pronouncements are submitted to the Board of Christian Education for study and approval. The Board exercises its power to correct and amend the proposals as may be necessary. In this action, all forty-five members of the Board of Christian Education, representing all sections of the Church, participate fully and freely.

3. The proposed pronouncements are then transmitted by the Board of Christian Education to the General Assembly. They are printed and mailed to every commissioner for careful study, prior to the meeting of the Assembly.

4. In the General Assembly, the proposed pronouncements from the Board of Christian Education are referred to the Standing Committee on Social Education and Action along with communications and recommendations from the General Assembly itself and from churches, presbyteries, and synods throughout the Church.

The Standing Committee is composed of twenty-two lay and ministerial commissioners, one from each of the General Assembly's voting sections.

There is no way of knowing the composition of this important committee in advance. Soon after the

convening of the Assembly each voting section holds a caucus to choose its representatives on this and other standing committees.

5. The Standing Committee on Social Education and Action studies the various communications referred to it, giving major attention to the recommendations from the Board of Christian Education. On the basis of these papers, but with a large measure of freedom and initiative within the definition of its task by the Assembly, the Standing Committee prepares its report. Many hours are spent in the preparation of this report. A member of the staff of the Division of Social Education and Action is usually present as a resource person. The completed report is often quite different in form and composition from the recommended pronouncements as submitted by the Board of Christian Education.

6. The Standing Committee's report is brought finally to the General Assembly for consideration. The session in which the report is reviewed and debated usually occurs late in the Assembly in order to give the Standing Committee sufficient time to complete its work. The report is printed and distributed among the commissioners on the preceding evening.

Invariably the report of the Standing Committee on Social Education and Action elicits a great deal of earnest discussion and debate. Sometimes important changes are made in

the report, although usually the Assembly chooses to receive and adopt the report with only minor alterations. The report, as amended and approved, becomes the social deliverance of the General Assembly.

### A Democratic Process at Every Step

It is important to observe that the many men and women who participate on this democratic procedure represent a variety of political and social points of view. They come from all sections of the country, from urban and rural communities, from large and small churches. They include men and women, lay persons and ministers. Socially they are both liberal and conservative.

It can be stated categorically that the process, thoroughly democratic from beginning to end, is controlled by no single group or point of view.

The deliverances of the General Assembly may not necessarily represent the prevailing attitudes and convictions of even a majority of Presbyterian ministers or members. Indeed, on some issues the General Assembly may be in sharp disagreement with what a great many Presbyterians think and believe.

The purpose of the General Assembly in formulating its social deliverances is primarily to discover the mind of Christ in relation to contemporary problems. The "social climate" of the Church is taken into account, but the pronouncements are

not based on an "opinion poll" of Presbyterians across the country. They represent an earnest effort on the part of a large group of sincere and serious persons to apply Christian principles to contemporary social issues. They have, and deserve to have, the endorsement, in attitude and practice, of a great many ministers and members in our churches.

### General Assembly Pronouncements Have Wide Influence

As to the meaning and force of the General Assembly social deliverances, the law of the Church says that they "have simply an advisory character, and the moral power which accompanies counsel given by so reverend a body" as the General Assembly.

That is, they are not binding upon the Church, its judicatories, its ministers, or its members. Presbyterians are free to make up their own minds on vexing social problems, seeking always and faithfully to know the mind of Christ in the matter. Sometimes ministers, sessions, and even presbyteries choose to do otherwise than as General Assembly counsels in social relations.

Even so, General Assembly's recommendations have far-reaching influence upon the thinking, the decision, and the actions of the Church and of men and women throughout the Church. The pronouncements are a clue to the rele-

vance of the gospel to today's social issues.

It is generally true that General Assembly's deliverances on contemporary social problems are not known to the rank and file of Presbyterian members. Many ministers and sessions seem to think of them as not applying to the life and work and responsibility of the local church. Yet every year the General Assembly recommends the pronouncements to ministers and churches for serious study and appropriate local action.

### **Presenting General Assembly's Actions to the Local Church**

The pronouncements are published in the minutes of the General Assembly. They are also published, with appropriate study and program suggestions, in a pamphlet prepared by the Division of Social Education and Action, for use in local churches.

The pronouncements can be used in the local church in many ways:

1. The minister may bring them to the attention of the members of

the session. A special meeting of the session may be devoted to the study of the pronouncements.

2. Copies of the pronouncements may be distributed among selected church leaders and members.

3. The pronouncements may be interpreted in midweek meetings, church forums, evening services, and meetings of women's and men's organizations.

4. The pronouncements may be studied by older youth groups, young adult groups, adult Bible classes, women's circles, and special groups organized for that purpose.

5. The social education and action committee of the local church may make a digest of the pronouncements for circulation among church members.

6. Selected pronouncements may be printed in the church bulletin.

*After all, the purpose of the General Assembly in its social deliverances is not completely fulfilled until every member of every church has been stirred and challenged by them.*

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## **The Social Pronouncements of the 162d General Assembly**

**Free copies of the Social Pronouncements of General Assembly may be obtained from the Division of Social Education and Action, 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa. They will be printed in attractive pamphlet form with practical and pertinent action and study projects suggested for local church groups. Make copies available to church officers, men's and women's groups, Sunday school and young people's leaders in your church.**

# A NEW APPROACH IN ADULT STUDY—"CROSSROADS"

By RAYMOND V. KEARNS, JR., director of the Department of Adult Work.

**I**N A few short months, *Crossroads*, the new adult curriculum, will be in most of your churches. *Crossroads* is written to serve many adult group needs in the church. Sunday morning adult church school classes, young adults using the Geneva Fellowship program, and many other adult groups will find in its pages valuable help for group study and experience.

It is the growing conviction among leaders in adult education that many adult classes or study groups break down because the leader or a talkative few dominate the sessions. There is no general participation or opportunity for learning. Ofttimes, the patterns of half a century ago still prevail, and many alert and conscientious adults cannot in all honesty share in such useless and time-wasting experiences.

To overcome this problem, the Church is making available new opportunities and techniques for study in *Crossroads*. For example, here are suggestions regarding the course "Books for Christian Study":

"Our study is different from the type of discussion carried out in the well-known 'great books' program,

but we can take some guidance from the procedure practiced there. The study will be done most effectively in the informal teaching situation in which the group sits around the room—perhaps someone's living room—in comfortable chairs and in a relaxed atmosphere, to discuss the book that *everyone has read*. There are no spectators in this course. Everyone is a participant. If he is not, he should not be included in the discussion group. And there is no teacher, strictly speaking. There is a *leader*, and his job is to keep the discussion rolling and turn it back toward a Christian emphasis when it seems to be losing that perspective."

This study pattern will be brand-new to many in the church; and when it is used with such books as Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*—the study book for the first quarter, beginning October, 1950—it presents limitless possibilities for study of the social conflicts that confront mankind. Paton's book, with its tale of intense and insoluble personal tragedy, coupled with the larger problem of the bitter racial ferment and unrest, is one that should stir the Christian conscience to action—

action within our church and community that leads to Christian fellowship without segregation, in home, church, community, and world. Group study of such books is far more conducive to fruitful thought and action than listening to a book review.

Another new step in group life and study is to be found in the "Program Guide" section of *Crossroads*, which is addressed to all adult groups other than Sunday church school classes. It is also an official part of the Geneva Fellowship program for young adults. Here, every quarter, will be worship, program, and fellowship suggestions for Couples Clubs and groups of unmarried adults.

In the first quarter, October, 1950, readers of SOCIAL PROGRESS will be interested in two suggested programs in the field of Christian social study and action. One deals with the United Nations, to be used during the week nearest World Order or United Nations Sunday, October 22.

These suggestions appear in the "United Nations" program in *Crossroads*:

1. Use of the film *Pattern for Peace* and details for discussion of film and a project linked with this study.
2. Panel discussion on the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and the "Covenant of Human Rights."
3. Suggested study of Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

4. A study of *The Bible and Human Rights*, by Kathleen MacArthur.

5. A trip to Lake Success, New York, for those who live near enough.

6. Visits with members of foreign legations.

The second social action program and project stresses "Alcohol Education." Such suggestions as these are made:

1. Get acquainted with the local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous. Secure a speaker.
2. Make a community audit on the cost of alcoholism in your community.
3. Have a teacher of physiology or a doctor speak on the effects of alcohol.
4. Plan group study and discussion of article by John C. Finney, "What's Ahead," which frankly faces this problem.
5. Follow study suggestions in Clifford Earle's manual, *Alcohol and People*.

These examples from the first issue of *Crossroads* point up an important direction of adult Christian education in the matter of content as well as methods. It is clear that these new and vital methods are needed!

Dr. Howard McClusky, nationally known adult educator from the University of Michigan, observes that of all institutions concerned with world affairs, the motives of the Church are most respected. Its potential impact on world affairs and the consciences of men are most penetrating.

# *An App*

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRONOUNCEMENTS

**W**HAT is the value of General Assembly pronouncements on social issues? Do they represent the opinion of the majority of the members of the Presbyterian Church? Are they a rule of social faith and practice that all loyal Presbyterians adhere to? What aid are they to the ministers and members of churches?

Perhaps no one knows what per cent of our members approve the positions taken by the General Assembly on social questions. A Gallup Poll might register more accurately and more cheaply our public opinion on social issues. But to question the Assembly's ability to represent the Church in such matters is to challenge our representative system and the Assembly's competence to act on any matter. If the mind and heart of our Church is to be made known, the commissioners of the General Assembly, chosen and ordained by the action of the people they represent, must speak for us in the pronouncements.

The Assembly's searching discussion in committee and on the floor does not turn on guesses as to what fifty or seventy-five per cent of the people approve, but what does God require. With this their great concern, our commissioners can depend upon the Christian people to "follow them so far as they see them follow Christ."

The influence of the pronouncements in the Church depends upon both the extent to which the pronouncements bring God's saving word to bear upon our problems and the seriousness with which the members regard their responsibility for discovering God's will in this time of perilous confusion.

The pronouncements have become to many a source of strength and encouragement. They regularly serve as guides to group study and action, and are the basis of the program of the Division of Social Education and Action. They, again, may be as stars in this dark world.

The Assembly meets this year under "cold" wartime conditions. The chasm dividing our one world into two widens. Daily the race in arms and weapons of mass destruction accelerates—a race that always has ended in war. The H-bomb issue has brought our rivalry to a grim climax and has stirred recent conferences of churchmen to declare that the Church must not remain silent. But if the Church must not remain silent, what has

# 'to Faith

it to say, what *must* it say, for God, to man? The prayers of the Church will attend the commissioners as they search for God's word for us.

## "WE ARE WORKERS TOGETHER"

**I**T is the temptation of a good man to think that he is doing the work of the Lord alone. This deception is the work of the devil; it is the strategy of "divide and conquer." For if good men can be isolated in even their imagination, they can be destroyed by despair and their cause defeated. But where "two or three are gathered together in my name" to search life's deepest problems and choose the best solution, an invincible bond of unity in faith and action will be established.

Group discussion and thinking is basic to group action. A teacher, even an authority on social issues, should not expect to address one hundred people for an hour and have all his hearers shout "Amen" and straightway do his bidding. This procedure was popular in prewar Germany, where multitudes listened to one man, shouted "*Heil!*" and went into action. This "leadership principle" is not popular with us. The "expert" may be correct; but if the decision is critical, members of his audience will have serious reservations and questions—and their own solutions to propose.

It is our habit to reason together before we are ready to act together. Americans have a deep faith in the democratic process, which provides for a free exchange of ideas. The leader who "does all the talking" and establishes a monopoly in this market place of ideas will not get the united intelligent action of free men. The fact that many of our meetings stop short of action is due not to obstructionism but rather to the fact that the group is composed of prudent men who insist on having the relevant facts and the best possible program for effective action.

The group process gives proper emphasis to the common man's decisive place in the discussion of important questions, the formulation of policy and action. In view of its importance to successful social education and action, the major portion of this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS is devoted to the group techniques. The Division of Social Education and Action is developing studies which will employ the most successful ideas of the group process. We expect that these will be available during the year.

—Paul Newton Poling.

# THE MINISTRY OF DRAMA

*An authority in the theater arts suggests four uses of the drama as an effective technique of social education and action.*

By MARION WEFER, playwright.

CENTURIES ago a child was born to the Church. It came into being in the chancel on an Easter morning to the chant of "*Quem quaeritis . . .*" from the choir. It was nurtured within the walls of the Church and grew strong and in favor with God and man. But it was a willful, ribald child and strayed outside its Father's house. So wild did the child become that the doors of its home were shut upon it. It became an outcast and even its playfellows were denied Christian burial.

The name of this child was Drama. As we read certain old scripts and consider what went on at the Feast of Fools, we must admit delinquent tendencies in the child. But was not the Church somewhat of a delinquent parent in its harshness toward its offspring?

Consider Scotland. And who but the Presbyterians have a better right? The Scots' Kirk had a stout champion in Sir David Lindsay of the Mount who wrote in its defense *A Satire on the Three Estates in Commendation of Virtue and Vituperation of Vice*. This was an immense success with the Scottish public in the middle of the sixteenth century. It did much to turn public sympathy

and loyalty toward Presbyterianism. But what was the reward to drama for this service? It was condemned and banished from Scotland for many dreary years. In 1756, however, a Scottish "poetical tragedy," written by Rev. John Home, had a wildly enthusiastic first night at the Canongate Theatre. "Where's your Wullie Shakspeare noo"? shouted the gallery. But the Kirk sternly drove the dramatist from the country and suspended every clergyman who attended a performance. Rev. John Home died a disappointed man.

But today in Scotland the prodigal has been welcomed home. The Gateway Theatre in Edinburgh is being run by the Church of Scotland. The notable Edinburgh drama festival revived *The Three Estates* and Virtue was commended and Vice vituperated for two triumphant seasons. It was the Edinburgh drama festival, you recall, that first produced T. S. Eliot's poetical quest of the sophisticate for God called *The Cocktail Party*. In New York this play was granted the Drama Critics' Circle Award for the best foreign play of the season.

For our mutual benefit we of the Church can join hands with drama.

First, by going to see plays that have social and religious content and that make issues that concern us as Christians come alive. Juvenile delinquency will never be just a newspaper headline if you have ever seen *Dead End*. *Waiting for Lefty* makes the cause of labor more vivid than tons of statistics. To see *Set My People Free*, or *According to Law*, or *They Shall Not Die*, or *Deep Are the Roots*, is more instantly illuminating than listening to much sober, factual discussion of the "race question." Yes, the Church and its child must mingle their ministry.

And off Broadway there are drama groups whose social significance should not be underestimated. These groups bear watching. The Actors' Theatre, a Negro and white group, is being directed by Warren Coleman of the *Lost in the Stars* company and should give rewarding performance. The Players' Company, a group of Yale students, will work at the Young Men's Hebrew Association in New York and much, considering the reputation of the Yale School of Drama, should be expected of them. It was from Yale that the hilarious *At War with the Army* burst forth. Incidentally, the protest of two of its actors against segregation in a Baltimore theater lifted the ban at the time.

Consider also the work being done by the American Theater Wing Community Plays. A series of plays called *Temperate Zone* which point

out the ways by which families may establish a healthy growing climate for children is sponsored in New York City by the Women's City Club. All church-centered young couples groups would have a vivid interest in this use of drama for the exposition of parent-child relationships.

Yes, we can go to the theater with profit. And, secondly, we can discuss our findings and supplement them with reading *Theatre Arts* magazine. And additional required reading is the report of the Howard Players of Howard University on their recent tour of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany in which they played *The Wild Duck* and *Mamba's Daughters*. This report appears in the March number entitled "The World Seemed Wide and Open," written by Owen Dodson. Ponder it in the light of the recent cancellation of a performance by Margaret Webster's Shakespearean Company in the deep South, because of the presence of two Negro actors. Also study "Theatre, Religion and Politics," by Eric Bentley in the same March number.

A third way to join hands with drama is to employ drama in worship and to produce suitable plays. To participate in a play and sink your identity into your role is to enlarge your human understanding enormously. "I do not ask the wounded man how he feels," said Walt Whitman ministering at the bedside of the soldiers of the Civil War, "I am the wounded man." So

the player. He is the sharecropper, the unemployed, the old and fearful, the young and confused, the D. P., the migrant, the Negro, the Jew. Or perhaps an early believer in the days when the Church was newborn. Active participation touches to the quick; new worlds open, reality comes close. Even as a player sheds his role he feels linked to the cause of his character. Something should be done about this! Social action should follow.

Your best guide to the full understanding of the place of drama in worship is *Conscience on Stage*, by Harold Ehrensparger, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. This also supplies a blueprint for organizing a drama group consecrated to a search for the truest and best. It emphasizes the importance of competent, consecrated leadership, draws up a "model Constitution for a drama group in the church," and has a valuable appendix with carefully selected play lists, a bibliography on the "history, technique, production and use of the drama in the church," a list of dealers and manufacturers of stage equipment and one of play publishers. Besides all this service, it clinches its case for *Conscience on Stage* by presenting Miss Amy Goodhue Loomis' case study of the use of drama in the Fountain Street Baptist Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Here the principles were tried out over a period of years—and they worked!

A fourth way to employ drama is to read plays in a group. Miss Amy Goodhue Loomis, guiding spirit of the Religious Drama Workshop, has prepared a delightful pamphlet on how to plan your group play-reading to best advantage. It may be obtained from the Department of Adult Work, Baptist Publication Society, 1701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Miss Mildred Hahn's book lists plays "For Reading and Discussion" also.

Radio plays should be considered for reading also and again the admirably thorough Miss Hahn offers a thoughtfully considered list for your selection. To this list I should like to add the book *Radio's Best Plays*, by Joseph Liss, Greenberg, Publisher. I would draw special attention to the script *The Story They'll Never Print*, by Erik Barnouw. In this script Mr. Barnouw reverses the usual trend in the inter-racial drama and tells us good news of an experiment in racial understanding in industry. It is especially good news because it was written with careful factual basis furnished by Leroy Jeffries, a Negro expert in industrial relations.

Finally, why not create drama yourselves in your church groups? Nor is there any good reason why this pleasurable technique should be the exclusive property of the young. The Over Sixty club in a community center in New York City recently staged a play written and produced

by its members, the youngest member of the cast being sixty-seven years of age and the oldest ninety-four. Together they relived their youth when they worked in sweatshops making clothes by hand. The social implications were tremendous for the audience, but it was the players and creators who had the fun of the fair. As one of the directors of the center commented: "These people seem to lose years magically . . . their learning capacities apparently have no limit." The book *Creative Dramatics*, by Winifred Ward, D. Appleton-Century, publishers, would be of help in this connection although it was written by an authority on children's dramatics for the guidance of leaders in that field. The basic principles are the same for children of larger growth. A group might dramatize a local situation or tension and satirize it, resolve it by a series of attempted solutions illustrating the right or wrong way to go about it, or simply make it vivid by holding up the dramatic mirror and having a discussion afterward.

Truly the drama is a great teacher, and as a medium of social education and action, it has limitless possibilities.

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**Marion Wefer adds this postscript to her article on the drama:**

*"If you are entering sincerely into fellowship with drama, you will want to attend or send a delegate to the 1950 Religious Drama Workshop to be held August 7-18 at Green Lake, Wisconsin. This offers an intensive ten days of study, rehearsal, and counseling on the techniques of religious drama by recognized authorities in the field. It costs \$55. For information write to Miss Amy Goodhue Loomis, Executive Director, 68 Ransom Avenue, N. E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. Or, if you have made up your mind, send your application to the International Council of Religious Education, 206 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago 4, Illinois. You will obtain many times fifty-five dollars' worth of knowledge and inspiration."*

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### Soviet-American Relations

Our own church conducted a series of public forums on Soviet-American relations which proved highly interesting. We secured the services of a number of people in this area who formerly lived in Soviet Russia, including two who were in Russian-controlled concentration camps during the war. An Orthodox priest was among them and since he could not speak English well, he prepared a paper and had it translated and read for him. Only local people were used as the speakers. They may not have had the experience and wide knowledge of the so-called experts, but they had warmth and enthusiasm, and were particularly skillful in organizing their thoughts and opinions for examination.

—J. I. Thomas, pastor, Healdsburg Federated Church, Healdsburg, California.

# FOR THE HOMELESS—HOMES

*Two communities mobilize to bring their Delayed Pilgrims home.*

## *"Cast Thy Bread"*

*By THOMAS A. GRAHAM, minister, New Providence Church,  
Maryville, Tennessee.*

NEW PROVIDENCE CHURCH, of Maryville, Tennessee, is all agog with expectation these days. Many months ago the church sent in assurances for three families of Displaced Persons, and word is expected any day that these families are en route to their new homes.

These months have been months not only of anticipation, but also of great revelation, for they have shown what can be done when the people in a church and a community work together on some great project. Preparation for the arrival of the Delayed Pilgrims has demanded both consecration and ingenuity, not only on the part of the original committee but also on the part of a constantly expanding circle of church folks who have been called upon to do their part in making homes for the homeless. Not the least interesting aspect of the project is that the jobs which have been provided—all farm jobs—have been provided, not by Presbyterians at all, but by members of other churches.

Take a trip any day to one of the farm homes that are being put in

readiness for their new tenants, and if you do not find some members of the Women's Association busy measuring, sewing, or hanging curtains, you will find some members of the Laymen's Council painting walls or building cupboards. Try to get into a Westminster Fellowship party without bringing a can of beans or peaches. You would probably find it easier to "crash the gates" at a major-league ball park during the World Series.

Work? Of course it is. Calls upon our time, our talents, and our money? Of course there are. But don't think for a moment that is isn't fun. It was fun for a group of women to wave the magic wand of hard work and imagination and transform a chicken house into one of the most comfortable three-room apartments you ever saw. This home for Cinderella has hollyhocks on either side of the front door. The combined kitchen and dining room has a stove, table, cupboards, and three windows which look out over the glorious Smoky Mountains. The ladies have seen to it, of course, that

the windows are tastefully curtained, the cupboards well provided with cups, saucers, plates, and bowls. The shelves are already laden with tea, coffee, jellies, and jams, and that is a supply that keeps on growing. The bedroom has a comfortable bed, a dresser, a lamp, comfortable chairs; but the pride and joy of the women who furnished it is a hope chest filled with everything from silk stockings to lamp shades. Picture the zest with which our Delayed Pilgrim will rummage when she gets here. The place fairly radiates promise; and from the cozy furnishings emanates a warm glow that only Christian brotherhood can produce.

So it has been with each of the three homes. They have presented our folks with more than a job; they have presented them with a challenge. You may be sure, however, that Cinderella was never more thrilled when the pumpkin became a carriage than Maryville has been by the transformation that has come about since love and brotherhood were put to work. It is our fervent hope that when our Delayed Pilgrims arrive, they will be conscious of blessing; but the blessing they receive will be as nothing compared to that which has come to the people who wait to receive them and who have found happiness in making others happy.

## *Detroit Holds a D. P. Workshop*

By MARSHALL W. SERGEANT, *elder, Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit, Michigan.*

CHURCHES of the Presbytery of Detroit found themselves about to receive a large quota of displaced families and single persons. We had very little specific knowledge of the problems involved, therefore it was imperative that we learn immediately how to meet the situation.

We desired to utilize every resource available to us in order to: (1) make the road easier for our coming guests; (2) avoid unnecessary effort and mistakes; (3) provide a smooth-working plan of operation for the job ahead.

The chairman of our Social Edu-

cation and Action Committee delegated to one of his lay members the task of planning a Workshop on the Reception of Displaced Persons to which representatives of all host churches would be invited.

The workshop program included experienced persons who could tell us how to avoid many pitfalls and overcome the problems that could not be avoided.

Miss Helen M. Day, case worker at the International Institute, Inc., explained the operation of this organization to aid the foreign-born, especially its personal counseling

service and guidance in work problems, citizenship, and integration into the community life.

Mrs. Zoltan Irshay, of the Delray Christian Neighborhood House, presented a fine picture of the life, customs, and class distinctions (and possible resultant attitudes) of peoples of southern Europe. Her talk was centered on Hungary, the birthplace of the Hungarian Reformed people we are expecting.

A recently arrived Displaced Person from Germany, of Russian origin, drew upon her memory of recent experiences on arriving in this country to help us to understand what personal adjustments were involved. Even shopping, for example, in our super markets is a frightening and hopeless task unless the newcomer has the help of a guide for a few times.

Rev. John Nagy, of the Hungarian Church, who has given assurances for 150 single Hungarian men, brought three of his recent arrivals and introduced them. He assured us that the men are willing to work. Two of the three men with him are trained engineers but now are pushing wheelbarrows in a foundry.

Sheldon Rahn, of the Detroit Council of Churches, concluded the speaking part of the program by co-ordinating the present actions and making the workshop program a unified whole. He clarified the actual reception procedures from the time the Displaced Persons leave the boat until they are settled in a home of their own. To switch these people all at once from their years of restricted diet to our diet, rich in fats, will cause illness. He also covered many of the legal and semilegal matters such as unemployment compensation, liability of the sponsor for a Displaced Person's becoming a "public charge."

After a general question and answer period conducted by the chairman, interested persons met the speakers in groups to discuss specific problems.

Through the council of churches, we invited representatives from other churches to attend our workshop. There was an attendance of seventy-eight persons representing about thirty separate churches, with our own denomination in the majority. We are convinced that this was a worth-while experience for all.

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Remember our nation, O God. Give us love to match our wisdom, faith to match our force, humility to match our might, sensitivity to match our authority, purity to match our power, insight to match our influence, grace to match our gifts. When we glory in our past, help us to remember the present with its needs; when we glory in our present, help us to remember the future with its problems. Let not thy blessing depart from us. Leave us not to our own devices. Establish thy reign among us, and let thy grace guide thy children into the land of promise thou hast prepared for us. Amen.

—By Fred E. Luchs, Athens, Ohio.

# CHRISTIAN Action

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## SEA FAMILY NIGHT PROGRAMS

For the past four years Westminster Presbyterian Church of Akron, Ohio, has successfully used, as a medium of social education and action, two or three of a series of six Lenten church family night dinner programs. As the name implies, a dinner and program are arranged for the entire family at the church each Wednesday night during Lent. The dinners are provided at a nominal cost by the church, with no intent to raise money. In addition to the adult meeting following the dinner which takes the first hour, programs keyed to their own age level are provided for the children.

The Social Education and Action Committee of the church, comprised of the session's committee plus a representative from each organization or unit of the church, is responsible for planning the presentations for each age group, co-ordinating them with the theme chosen for the season, and securing promotional publicity. A chairman, appointed to be responsible for each age level, recruits whatever assistants are required to carry out his particular plan, recommends speakers, literature, audio-visual aids, and whatever expressional or other materials may be necessary. This year, the brief devotional periods which open each program were presented by different organizations of the church and the Westminster Fellowship groups provided several splendid services.

The first year, a forum featuring members of the church discussed our own specific attitude—were we, the members and friends of Westminster, making a truly Christian approach to the racial problem on our own doorstep? At the two following

meetings we heard Negro speakers and participated in discussions of what we could and should do.

During the second Lenten series an international relations program was provided with films on the causes and results of war. *One World or None*, *Round Trip*, *Seeds of Destiny*, *Food, the Secret of Peace*, and *The Way of Peace* were shown. In conjunction with that year's program there were also discussion periods and forums led by our own members. These discussions revealed the strengths and weaknesses of our present efforts at world organization and considered what we as Christians could do for peace. At one meeting, a splendid study was presented citing measures then before Congress. We were urged to express our opinions and Christian convictions. As a result many letters were sent to our Senators and Representatives. Our people had been stirred to deep thinking on national and international problems.

The third year emphasized our community youth problem, with a special discussion on delinquency. Dr. Paul Armstrong, the Protestant Youth counselor representing the Juvenile Protection group of our city made a telling impact with his presentation, "The Church's Responsibility to Youth." As Protestant Youth counselor he establishes regular and controlled contact with pre-delinquents and those who are brought before court or returned from penal institutions in order to assist in their rehabilitation. As a result of discussion of Dr. Armstrong's talk, an appeal was made for men and women to take an intensive training course and become advisers to these young people. At least a dozen of our members responded, took the training

course, and have worked actively ever since. Each year a new member is trained to assist in this Juvenile Protection program. At the present time one of our elders, Walter J. Kuss, is the chairman of the West Akron Protestant Juvenile Protection Committee.

The 1950 Lenten dinner series just concluded featured Rev. William H. McConaghy, who opened the Social Education and Action series with a challenging message on our responsibilities and the problems pertaining to racial and cultural relationships. In response to his message, Westminster Church was prominent in working with the other churches of the Akron area in an Interdenominational Institute on Racial and Cultural Relations in April, arranged in consultation with the local council of churches.

At another meeting the showing of the film *Answer for Anne* stimulated extended discussion of the Displaced Persons prob-

lem, with the result that our session and Church-wide Displaced Persons Committee was urged to secure assurances for a D.P. family. Within the past week assurances have been given for a Hungarian family to arrive by the end of this month in our community.

At the final meeting we met Dr. Tracy D. Spencer, director of the Woodland Center Presbyterian Community House in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Spencer's frank and moving address about our Negro-white relationships indicated that it is a white problem, not a Negro problem. The discussion that followed revealed that our people have been definitely changing and developing in their Christian attitudes during the past several years as a consequence of the Lenten family night programs.

—Rev. William F. MacCalmont,  
pastor, Westminster Presby-  
terian Church, Akron, Ohio.

## U.S. AND U.S.A. YOUTH MEET

In a land where almost every child can whistle "Dixie" and where many leading whites and Negroes believe that there is "no race problem," there are few places where the two races meet to do something about the problems of the South. The most logical place for sincere discussion and action on the problems of the South is, of course, among the youth, our Christian youth on college campuses. But many are the obstacles that stand in the way of such meetings for any purpose. The laws of the various states, the customs of the communities, the apprehension of college administrators ever mindful of the board of trustees are some of these complications.

But the challenge of the Christian faith to go and do that which we know to be the mind of Christ has surmounted the obstacles and Presbyterian students of North Carolina have been working for nearly three years to attack the evil of segregation and prejudice.

The Presbyterian youth, U.S., of college age invited the Presbyterian youth, U.S.A., of college age, to join in the fellowship of their annual meetings. All the sessions are shared by both groups. The leaders of the seminars are qualified persons from both denominations.

The housing of the annual meeting delegates is handled by the local sponsoring churches; and though there is no great effort at publicity, the news of these beginnings has spread, and there is now a path for others to follow.

The efforts of these youth groups are not unrewarded, for even the skeptics and those who would not see find a faint glow of hope. The war song of the South "The time is not right" is being sung with less and less belief. In youth there is awakening hope that the time is now.

—Bryant George, Johnson C.  
Smith University, Charlotte,  
North Carolina.

## WHAT MEN'S GROUPS CAN DO

Since the the Seminar on Agriculture in Washington, I have carried its message to a number of interested people—to the Neosho Presbytery and to individuals in our city, to my farm friends in nearby communities, and by letter to some in other cities, including several fine Congressmen on key committees.

Surely this is the *time* Christian peoples have been hoping and praying for. With a war of final destruction rushing upon the world, every Christian ought to become a channel of living love.

From a practical standpoint, there are a number of things local men's clubs in our churches might do, for example, about great hunger in the midst of apparent surpluses of food and fiber. Here are five points of action:

1. Hold a panel or forum type discussion on this subject. Many materials are available from Congressmen, from the Department of Agriculture, and from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (Longfellow Building, Washington, D.C.).

2. Arrange a meeting with a Congressman or Senator to speak and answer questions particularly on the moral issues at stake: What about reducing production or destroying food surpluses while millions are hungry?

3. Then in honest, unselfish manner attack the problems with Christlike action:

(a) Should the surplus food and fibers be given to the needy? (b) Should we pay part of the shipping costs? (c) Can we do this in a way that will not ruin the foreign farmer and permanently weaken the moral fiber of those receiving aid? (d) Frankly, what will be the consequences of our failures? Is there any other possible solution for the Christian churchman to consider?

4. Subscribe to SOCIAL PROGRESS and the Friends' Newsletter (1100 Tenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.). Each men's group ought to have at least five copies of these publications. Members should read them regularly and report monthly to their club suggestions for *action*. They are not just matters for conversations and fine-sounding motions.

5. As soon as men begin to feel somewhat posted about the real needs and opportunities, insist that they write their views to their servants in Government, urging immediate Christian action, regardless of party, creed, or race, and indicating that the men are *willing* to be a part of that action.

The present situation is full of political and racial dynamite. But there is a power that moves infinitely faster and with more effect than any explosive that man has conceived—that is *living prayer*, in action.

—L. W. Lowe, Presbyterian layman, Paola, Kansas.

## CITIZENSHIP

**S. 3420**—A bill to extend for another year American participation in the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was introduced by Senator Taft (R, Ohio) with joint sponsorship of 17 other Senators and placed before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1948 authorized up to \$100 million for UNICEF on the matching formula whereby our

Government released \$72 to the equivalent of every \$28 contributed by other Governments as of April 1, this year. Congress has appropriated \$75,000,000 for this program and 41 other countries have made contributions sufficient to withdraw all of these amounts.

Unless Congress allocates funds at least to cover the contribution soon to come from Australia and New Zealand, there

will be embarrassment to our country and to the UNICEF.

A similar bill (**H.R. 7742**) was introduced in the House Foreign Affairs Committee by Rep. Ribicoff (D, Conn.).

The Children's Fund was unanimously established by the first General Assembly of the UN to assist the child victims of war, and to provide emergency child health services. Lack of financial resources limited both the geographical scope and the types of aid available for children. As a result the Fund had to concentrate its resources in Europe and stress services that would bring quick results, as, for example, supplementary feeding of milk and cod-liver oil, and mass campaign against tuberculosis under the technical direction of WHO. The Fund also provided training for doctors, nurses, and social workers.

The work of the Fund was carefully examined last fall by members of the House Subcommittee on Appropriations, especially in Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Albania. The committee had high praise for the courage and efficiency of the program and its operation.

However, other U. S. Government agencies, particularly in the State Department, believe that the time has come to end the Fund as an "emergency" operation, and urge the organization of a long-range, permanent program for international child welfare through the UN, and through technical assistance to the several countries needing this aid.

Spokesmen for the Fund at Lake Success and members of the eighteen-nation UN Social Commission are expected to fight for the extension of the program until the permanent service is in full operation. FAO and WHO can provide advice and technical assistance, but not food supplies.

SOCIAL PROGRESS readers are urged to communicate with their Senators and Senator Taft about Senate action on this question.

**H.R. 6000**, a bill to strengthen and extend the present Federal Social Security program, was passed by the House on October 5, 1949. The Senate version of the bill is now being formulated in the Senate Finance Committee. It is expected to match the general provisions of the House bill.

The Senate bill would (1) extend the present law's inadequate coverage to an additional 8,500,000 workers (11,000,000 in the House bill); increase retirement benefits by about 70 per cent, and include totally and permanently disabled workers. Both the Senate and House bills provide coverage on a voluntary basis for lay employees of churches and religious institutions.

The general agreement that the present law adopted in 1935 is "painfully inadequate for the needs of today" is indicated by the fact that H.R. 6000 was passed by a vote of 333 to 14, only 12 Republicans and 2 Democrats dissenting.

**S. 3304**—The foreign aid bill to authorize a third year of Marshall Plan aid, and provide an expenditure for \$3,372,450,000 for European economic recovery was passed by the Senate on May 5, with an amendment providing for a cut of \$250,000,000. The figure represented for ECA is based on careful estimates of what our Government must provide if we are to retain the benefits derived from our previous expenditures in Europe. It also includes an initial allocation of \$45,000,000 for Point Four aid to underdeveloped nations.

**S. 2311**—Subversive Activities Control Act, 1950, introduced by Senators Mundt and Ferguson, was approved on March 4 by the Senate Judiciary Committee with only one dissenting by Senator Langer. (See May SOCIAL PROGRESS, page 37.) In 1948, the 160th General Assembly opposed "the Mundt Bill as a denial of our civil rights," and affirmed the fact that "we already have sufficient laws on our statute books that can be used to control subversive and treasonable activities." Many

believe that our democratic institutions are at stake in this issue, and that the bill is irreconcilable with the guarantees of the U. S. Constitution.

**S. 1847**—The bill to provide interstate restriction on liquor advertising was killed in Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee by a vote of 6 to 3.

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**Is there a bulletin board in your church? Where is it located? When you last looked at it what was the date of the most recent announcement it carried? Have you thought of using it at least occasionally for SEA purposes?**

Current and lively bulletin board arrangements could be an excellent project for two or three members of the SEA committee and an enormously helpful means of introducing the members of your church to the social concerns of Presbyterians. Photographs, pamphlets from our Division of Social Education and Action, clippings from newspapers and magazines, maps, cartoons, all have eye appeal for your SEA message. SEA emphases follow the church calendar and an SEA bulletin board can be as arresting as tomorrow's headlines.

Modern advertising research has given us many approaches to the human mind and spirit. We recommend the bulletin board as one dependable visual aid! Clifford Earle, our Associate Secretary, had the good idea of presenting some bulletin board arrangements for SOCIAL PROGRESS. He photographed the one below, combined with a display of literature and plans to do a series on other SEA emphases.



# Sanctuary

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## Sentences:

"Have mercy upon us, O Lord, according to thy lovingkindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sins."

## Invocation:

Our Heavenly Father, after whom the whole family in heaven and in earth is named, in this age which speaks so much about our relationships in groups but which makes us behave as though we lived our solitary lives, restore unto us a sense of our relationship to one another and to thee in such a way that whole congregations of worshipers may feel thy Spirit moving among them and so be energized to accomplish great spiritual tasks in thy name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Hymn:** "Forgive, O Lord, Our Severing Ways."

**Scripture Lesson:** Matt. 13: 33; Acts 2: 1-21.

## Meditation:

The Christian gospel speaks to each succeeding generation in terms of that generation's spirit and needs. It is eternal; but only when men of each age understand the Christian message and its relevance to their times does Christianity make its impress.

Today we are experiencing the close of an era in which there has been strong emphasis upon the importance of the individual. In considerable measure this emphasis has been healthy. From the Christian point of view the importance of the individual must be stressed in every age, for God's love and grace are primarily dispensed to individuals. But for the past five decades we have laid such emphasis upon the centrality of the individual in industry, commerce, science, the professions and the arts, that at times we have forgotten the central importance of the society and groups in which the individual lives.

The corporate responsibilities of Christians ought to be very clear. The church is a communion of many spirits and all its members ought to have a part in that communion. Church and community life have deteriorated when men have failed to see their relationships and responsibilities to each other and when they have been preoccupied solely with their individual pursuits.

This failure of men to live co-operatively with other fellows has been clearly seen in the secular order. But its results have also profoundly influenced the mission of the Church, and reduced the intensity of the Christian message in an age which sorely needs a concentrated gospel.

Despite all this, among our Christian leaders one still hears much about getting people to "do something for the church." That is not surprising in a generation which

has so frequently asked, "What can we do about it?" Indeed, the Church would be a sorry institution if there were no men and women and young people who economically, recreationally, spiritually, actively, did not "do something for the Church." But it must be noted that the New Testament places less stress upon our doing something for the Church as upon the Church doing something for us!

In one of his books, an eminent Presbyterian minister of the present age makes this point eloquently (and not without a touch of humor) when he suggests that the famous hymn "Rise Up, O Men of God" would be more true to Christian living if it read, "Sit down, O men of God; His Kingdom he will bring; sit down, O men of God, you cannot do a thing."

That observation is not so flippant as it sounds. Our planning, our organizational life, our suppers, our financial campaigns, even our church attendance, mean little unless the church is doing something for us, and, if for us, then for every man or woman who enters our sanctuaries.

Our great scientific insights into human nature seem paltry when we encounter afresh the piercing insights of Christ. On one occasion he said that the Kingdom of God, and to some extent that means the modern Christian Church, is like the leaven which a woman puts into a measure of meal. Though small at first, it gradually extends its fermentation through the meal until it is all leavened. We would express that thought in modern terms by saying that Christianity is an infectious force. Either we Christians will so infect other people, or we are not ourselves infected with Christ's Spirit.

There is no such thing as solitary Christianity, and no such thing as passive Christianity. Christians will conduct their lives in groups, or there is no Christian life at all. This is what our modern leaders and thinkers mean when they speak about the central importance of the group process within the church.

#### Prayer:

Our Father which art in heaven, impress upon our minds, we beseech thee, the realization that where thy Spirit is at work within our lives none of us can possibly live unto himself. In modern, rich, and clear ways lead us to the conviction that our relationship to thee automatically binds us to other Christians.

Grant us humility. Convince us that our Christian faith is no more or less valid than the faith of other Christians. Tear down the barriers that we have allowed our pride to construct between ourselves and others. Teach our generation how to build bridges from one Christian spirit to another. Deliver us from all tendencies to think that we are walking our Christian ways alone. Forgive all those who have been spiritual isolationists. And forgive us when we fall before the false gods of exclusion.

Raise up among us in this tepid day the awareness that God may still inflame the hearts of Christian worshipers through his presence in their midst. Wherever we share our activities and ideals and plans with other friends of Christ, grant that we may yield ourselves to thee as channels through which thou mayest pass in thy journey into the collective soul of our group, our congregation, and our church. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—Prepared by Rev. James B. Reid, minister, First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Social Education and Action chairman, Philadelphia Presbytery.

# About Books

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**Elmtown's Youth**, by A. B. Hollingshead. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. \$4.00.

A sociologist looks at the social system of a Middle Western corn belt community—Elmtown, Home State, U.S.A.—and how it controls the social attitudes and behavior of adolescents of high school age. His analysis is of particular interest to pastors, youth leaders, and all others concerned with youth work in the community.

Under the sponsorship of the Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago, the author took up residence in the community identified as Elmtown and remained there with his family during the ten months of his study. After establishing the necessary relationships in the town, he concentrated his study on the group of young people whose graduation from the eighth grade occurred between 1938 and 1941. There were 735 adolescents in this group; of this number 390 were in high school in 1941, the year the study was made, and 345 had left school prematurely. The book deals with these young people and their social behavior in relation to the school, the job, the church, recreation, cliques, dates, and sex.

Much of the social conduct of adolescents, the author finds, is related to the positions their families occupy in the social structure of the town. There are five classes in Elmtown all determined by prestige, financial status, place of residence.

For those concerned with the Christian education of young people, the chapter on "Religion and Religious Behavior" will be both revealing and challenging. "Religion to these adolescents is comparable in a way to wearing clothes or taking a bath. It is something one has to have, to be acceptable in society." About 90 per cent of

the boys and 80 per cent of the girls have almost no sense of compulsion about either the church or their Christian faith.

It comes as something of a shock to see how largely ineffective are most of the efforts we of the Church make to reach and serve young people, yet the reasons given are both convincing and indisputable. The records of the various churches in Elmtown are none too encouraging. The attitudes and efforts of ministers seem to be typical, and much of their ineffectiveness and frustration is the result of "the conspiracy of silence" on the part of young people.

The study of the 345 who had left school prematurely reveals that the church occupies almost no place whatever in their lives. They are the Class IV and Class V young people whom every community agency has neglected and lost.

No solutions are offered to the facts brought out in this exhaustive study. To suggest solutions, the author states, was not in his province. But the need for finding answers to the problems and for bridging the gaps between our democratic idealism and our actual class system in America haunts the author. It should haunt the reader too, especially if he be in the service of Christ and his Church.

—*Gilbert F. Close, Jr.*

**Sermons of Good Will**, edited by Guy Emery Shipler. Association Press. \$3.00.

A specific promotion of good will and understanding among all peoples was begun by *The Churchman* in 1939. Each year since then "The Churchman Award" has been bestowed upon the American who was outstanding for such action. To stimulate clergymen to preach on the subject of good will, the Sermon of the Week

Project was inaugurated. In this book are forty-eight prize sermons, each of which has been delivered to a congregation. Each of these sermons received the "Sermon of the Week" citation and was read over a radio network.

The sermons are representative of what preachers are saying in the attempt to apply the principles of religion to the social order. Twelve of the sermons are by Presbyterians. The book is very helpful and stimulating, and any pastor who wonders how to deal with social issues will find in it a gold mine of inspiration and illustration.

—Gordon W. Mattice.

**Primer of Intellectual Freedom**, by Howard Mumford Jones. Harvard University Press. \$2.75.

Howard Mumford Jones is professor of English at Harvard University. It is appropriate that the book dealing with problems of freedom of speech and press should come from Harvard, stanch defender yesterday and today of freedom in its most meaningful sense.

This book gathers together from our Anglo-Saxon world fifteen documents that point up the kind of freedom that is imperative for our democratic society. The first is the statement made by President James R. Killian, of M. I. T., relative to the case of Professor Struik. The last is a portion of Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, his defense of the dignity of knowledge. Also included are Robert M. Hutchins' statement to the Broyles Commission at the time of the investigation of alleged Communist activities at the University of Chicago; Commager's splendid article, first printed in *Harper's* "Who's Loyal to America?"; selections from the great dissenting opinions of Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Morley, John Stuart Mill, John Milton, and Thomas Jefferson. Here within a small compass are the great and enduring affirmations against intellectual and political tyranny, defense of the free

mind, faith in the validity of truth to win over error.

As John Morley put it quoting an unknown person, "an opinion gravely professed by a man of sense and education demands always respectful consideration." This is the logic of our Protestantism and of our democracy, but our public schools are afraid of the privilege, hence free and open discussion of controversial issues is in many places forbidden. Some churches are afraid of it and keep the minister in an economic and political (and religious?) strait jacket of the brand of the National Association of Manufacturers. Our Government is afraid of it, and the Committee on Un-American Activities continues to destroy reputations of the people whose political or economic philosophy that committee arbitrarily assumes is un-American.

What is Americanism? Jefferson wrote: "If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it."

In this period of hysteria, witch-hunting, iron curtains (we have one too), loss of faith in our great tradition of dissent, and open exchange of ideas, it is heart-warming and faith-renewing to read again these classic affirmations of intellectual freedom that lie at the basis of our Western cultural heritage.

Buy this book! Get your people to read these historic documents. This book could be the basis for stimulating evening discussions.

My only regret about the book is that it includes nothing from the Protestant Reformers. Mr. Jones might logically have printed Luther's "Christian Freedom" and also certain selections from the Bible. Our heritage of freedom has its deepest roots in the Scriptures.

—H. Richard Rusniusson.

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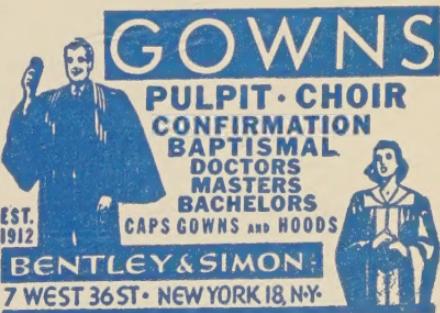
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*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.*

*Isaiah 1: 18*

*Give me the liberty to know, to think, to believe, and to utter freely, according to conscience, above all other liberties.*

*Milton*

*I do not agree with a word you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.*

*Voltaire*

*Forums for widespread and free discussion of public affairs are very much more than convenient expedients. They are vital necessities in the maintenance of democratic institutions. . . . It is, therefore, in the interest of the general welfare that organization and maintenance of public forums be encouraged everywhere.*

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

*If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.*

*U.S. Supreme Court, 1945, Board of Education vs. Burnette*

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

*First Amendment, Constitution of the U.S.A.*